

Remarks

The application has been reviewed in light of the Official Action mailed August 10, 2004. By the foregoing amendments, the drawings, specification, and claims 1-2 have been amended, and claims 4-6 have been newly introduced. Claims 1-6 are pending in the application. No new matter is introduced by the amendments. Supports for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, claims, and drawings of the original application.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings and specification because of certain informalities. In compliance to the Examiner's suggestions in the Office Action, Figures 7A and 7B of the drawings have been amended to respectively include a legend of "Prior Art." Other informalities in the specification are also corrected by the foregoing amendments.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Friedman (U.S. Patent No. 6,234,628).

As amended independent claim 1 specifically recites, claims 1-3 of the invention each require among other limitations: that the housing of the length adjusting device has a closed inner wall formed in a longitudinal direction for preventing penetration of foreign matters through the inner wall; that the stoppers is placed inside the closed inner wall of the housing; and that the inner wall of the housing and the stoppers have the same cross section allowing a longitudinal movement of the stoppers within the housing and together forming rotation preventing units for preventing rotation of the bridge elements.

Applicant respectfully submits that Friedman (U.S. Patent No. 6,234,628) fails to disclose or teach each and every element or limitation of claims 1-3 as amended. In

particular, Applicant respectfully submits that, for example, the above-identified limitations of claims 1-3 are not disclosed or taught by Friedman. Contrary to the claimed invention and as clearly described in the background and summary sections of the invention disclosure (see paragraphs [0006] to [00014] in association with Figures 7A and 7B), the Friedman device includes slot 14 formed in the housing 9 and protrusion 13 of the stopper 11 extends to the slot 14 for reciprocal and non-rotational movement of bridge element 5 along the housing 9.

Therefore, the housing 9 of Friedman does not include a closed inner wall for preventing penetration of foreign matters through the inner wall, as required by claims 1-3 of the invention and over which problem the present invention is concerned to solve. Moreover, because the protrusion 13 extends into the slot 14, the stopper 11 of Friedman is not placed inside the closed inner wall of the housing 9. Furthermore, because of the protrusion 13 extending into the slot 14, the inner wall of the housing 9 and the stopper 11 of Friedman does not have the same cross section allowing a longitudinal movement of the stoppers within the housing and together forming rotation preventing units for preventing rotation of the bridge elements.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3 of the invention are patentably distinct over Friedman.

Applicant respectfully submits that newly introduced claims 4-6 each has limitations similar to the above-identified ones, and thus is also patentable at least under the same reasons discussed above.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims currently pending in the application (i.e., claims 1-6) are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and early notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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In the Drawings

Please amend Figures 7A and 7B of the drawings as indicated in the replacement sheet of the drawings enclosed herewith.